

IN THE DRAWINGS

Please amend FIG. 1 and 2 as described in the enclosed proposed drawings.

REMARKS

I. Introduction

In response to the Office Action dated September 21, 2006, claims 1, 9, and 15 have been amended. Claims 1-20 remain in the application. Re-examination and re-consideration of the application, as amended, are respectfully requested.

II. Claim Amendments

Applicant's attorney has made amendments to the claims as indicated above. These amendments were made solely for the purpose of clarifying the language of the claims, and were not required for patentability or to distinguish the claims over the prior art.

III. Objections to the Drawings

In paragraph (1) of the Office Action, FIGS. 1 and 2 were objected to because they contain blank boxes which are not widely recognized engineering symbols.

The Applicant thanks the Examiner and has placed legends by the boxes in FIGS. 1 and 2 in accordance with 37 C. F. R. § 1.84. Both replacement sheets and annotated sheets showing the added legends are attached hereto. The legends are supported by the specification as filed, at least at page 6, lines 18-20, and on page 9, line 20, and, as such, no new matter has been added.

IV. Prior Art Rejections

In paragraphs (2)-(3) of the Office Action, claims 1-3, 6-10, and 12-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Uchikubo et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,480,762 (Uchikubo). In paragraph (4) of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-17, and 19-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Richenstein et al., U.S. Publication No. 2003/0083024 (Richenstein). In paragraph (5) of the Office Action, claims 1, 2, 4-9, 11-17, and 19-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Milley et al., U.S. Publication No. 2002/0186676 (Milley).

Applicant acknowledges the indication of allowable claims, but respectfully traverses these rejections.

The Uchikubo Reference

Uchikubo merely describes a plurality of pieces of medical equipment each of which includes a microcomputer and has a program used to control the microcomputer stored in a reprogrammable storage device such as an EEPROM is linked to a remote computer over a communication line. Using a rewriting/updating program sent from the computer, each piece of medical equipment rewrites or updates the program stored in the storage device. When a plurality of programs is stored, if one of the programs is rewritten or updated abnormally, the other program is used to activate medical equipment.

The Richenstein Reference

Richenstein merely describes a wireless transmission device for communicating a plurality of audio streams to remote devices comprises a plurality of inputs for receiving a plurality of digital audio streams, a combiner connected to the inputs for combining control codes and the received audio streams in a predetermined format to form a signal wherein the control codes for controlling the operation of a remote device equipped for processing the signal to extract the audio streams therefrom in accordance with the predetermined format, and a transmitter connected to the combiner to transmit the signal for reception by the remote device. The transmitter may include an infra-red light emitter for transmitting the signal as an infra-red light signal.

The Milley Reference

Milley merely describes a method, apparatus and article of manufacture for obtaining and displaying Internet content using a remote secondary display and a primary handheld computing device. The primary device includes a cellular or satellite modem to connect to the Internet and wireless data transport system to communicate with the secondary device. The primary device retrieves network data from the Internet and transmits it to the secondary device for display. The secondary device includes a graphical user interface which may be controlled from the primary device.

The Claims are Patentable over the Cited References

The present invention is directed towards systems and methods for transmitting signals from a remote controller. A system in accordance with the present invention transmits signals from a remote controller to a plurality of optically controlled devices, wherein each of the optically controlled devices respond in a similar fashion to a given optical input signal, and comprises a repeater device adapted to receive the given optical input signal from the remote controller and to generate an electrical output signal, a switching device that selectively connects the repeater device to a connector, and a plurality of light emitting devices, connected to the connector in a respective fashion, for generating and transmitting an optical output signal to the optically controlled device in response to the electrical output signal received from the repeater device, such that only a subset of the plurality of optically controlled devices receive the optical output signal based on a position of the switching device.

The cited references do not teach nor suggest the limitations of the claims of the present invention. Specifically, the cited references do not teach nor suggest at least the limitation of the optically controlled devices responding similarly to a given optical input signal, and that only a subset of the plurality of optically controlled devices receive the optical output signal based on a position of the switching device, as recited in the claims of the present invention.

The Uchikubo Reference Does Not Anticipate the Claims

In the Uchikubo reference, optical signals are not mentioned to control the medical devices. Further, other than optical switches being used (see Uchikubo, FIG. 17, SW1 and SW2) for electrical isolation purposes, optical signals are not mentioned at all.

However, even if Uchikubo were to mention optically controllable devices, the devices must all have a unique ID (see FIG. 21 and Col. 18, lines 14-23) so that the system can differentiate between one piece of equipment and another. The centralized operator panel 103 does not send out a generic command that is selectively received by only a subset of the equipment; the centralized operator panel 103 of Uchikubo only sends the command to one piece of medical equipment based on the unique ID of that equipment. As such, the Uchikubo reference does not teach nor suggest at least the limitations of optically controlled devices responding similarly to a given optical input signal, and that only a subset of the plurality of optically controlled devices receive the optical output signal based on a position of the switching device, as recited in the claims of the present invention.

The Richenstein Reference Does Not Anticipate The Claims

The Richenstein reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Uchikubo reference. Every headset unit 14 that is present in the region of the infrared signals 16, (transmitted by transmitter 806 shown in FIG. 19) receives all of the signals from Audio Stage 36, MP3 player 44, and other units 54 and 62, because these signals are all combined in Signal Combiner/Multiplexer 32. The selection of which signal to get to the earphones 81 and 83 is made by the receiver (via the switching selector 78), not by the transmitter.

In contrast, the present invention selects which device receives the IR signal 16 from the transmission end of the system, wherein the position of the switching device is selected by the transmitter, not the receiver. Further, only a subset of the receiver(s) receive a given signal; in Richenstein, all receivers receive all signals, and, in essence filter out the undesired signals via the switching selector 78. As such, Richenstein does not teach nor suggest at least the limitation of the optically controlled devices responding similarly to a given optical input signal, and that only a subset of the plurality of optically controlled devices receive the optical output signal based on a position of the switching device, as recited in the claims of the present invention.

The Milley Reference Does Not Anticipate the Claims

Similarly, the Milley reference does not remedy the deficiencies of the Uchikubo and Richenstein references. Again, all devices in Milley have unique ID numbers, which are required for bus architectures, so that only the device that a user desires can read and/or decode the command or data from a given source. As such, any positioning device present in Milley does not determine the receipt of optical signals; the unique ID of each device connected to the bus architecture does. See Milley, Paragraphs [0087] – [0088]. As such, Milley does not teach nor suggest at least the limitation of the optically controlled devices responding similarly to a given optical input signal, and that only a subset of the plurality of optically controlled devices receive the optical output signal based on a position of the switching device, as recited in the claims of the present invention.

Even when combined, the references do not teach or suggest the limitations of the present invention. Combining references that, alone, do not teach a given limitation or limitations, cannot, as a matter of law or fact, teach that limitation or limitations when combined. That limitation or limitations will still be absent from any combination of references. As such, not only do the cited references not teach the claim limitations individually, no combination of the cited references can teach the limitations that are present in the claims but absent in the cited references, namely, at least

the limitation of the optically controlled devices responding similarly to a given optical input signal, and that only a subset of the plurality of optically controlled devices receive the optical output signal based on a position of the switching device, as recited in the claims of the present invention.

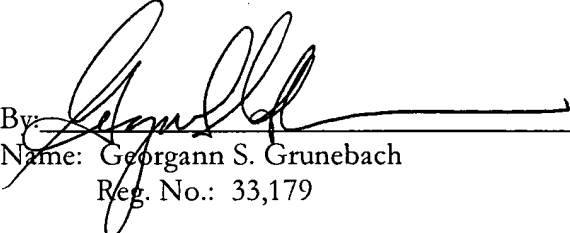
Moreover, the various elements of Applicant's claimed invention together provide operational advantages over Uchikubo, Richenstein, and Milley. In addition, Applicant's invention solves problems not recognized by Uchikubo, Richenstein, and Milley. For example, and not by way of limitation, the present invention allows for multiple devices to be responsive to the same command and located in a geographically confined location, yet that command can be differentiated by the system and methods of the present invention but not by the teachings of the cited references.

Thus, Applicant submits that independent claims 1, 9, and 15 are allowable over Uchikubo, Richenstein, and Milley. Further, dependent claims 2-8, 10-14, and 16-20 are submitted to be allowable over Uchikubo, Richenstein, and Milley in the same manner, because they are dependent on independent claims 1, 9, and 15, respectively, and thus contain all the limitations of the independent claims. In addition, dependent claims 2-8, 10-14, and 16-20 recite additional novel elements not shown by Uchikubo, Richenstein, and Milley.

V. Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is now in good order for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner believe minor matters still remain that can be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is urged to call Applicant's undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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FIG. 1

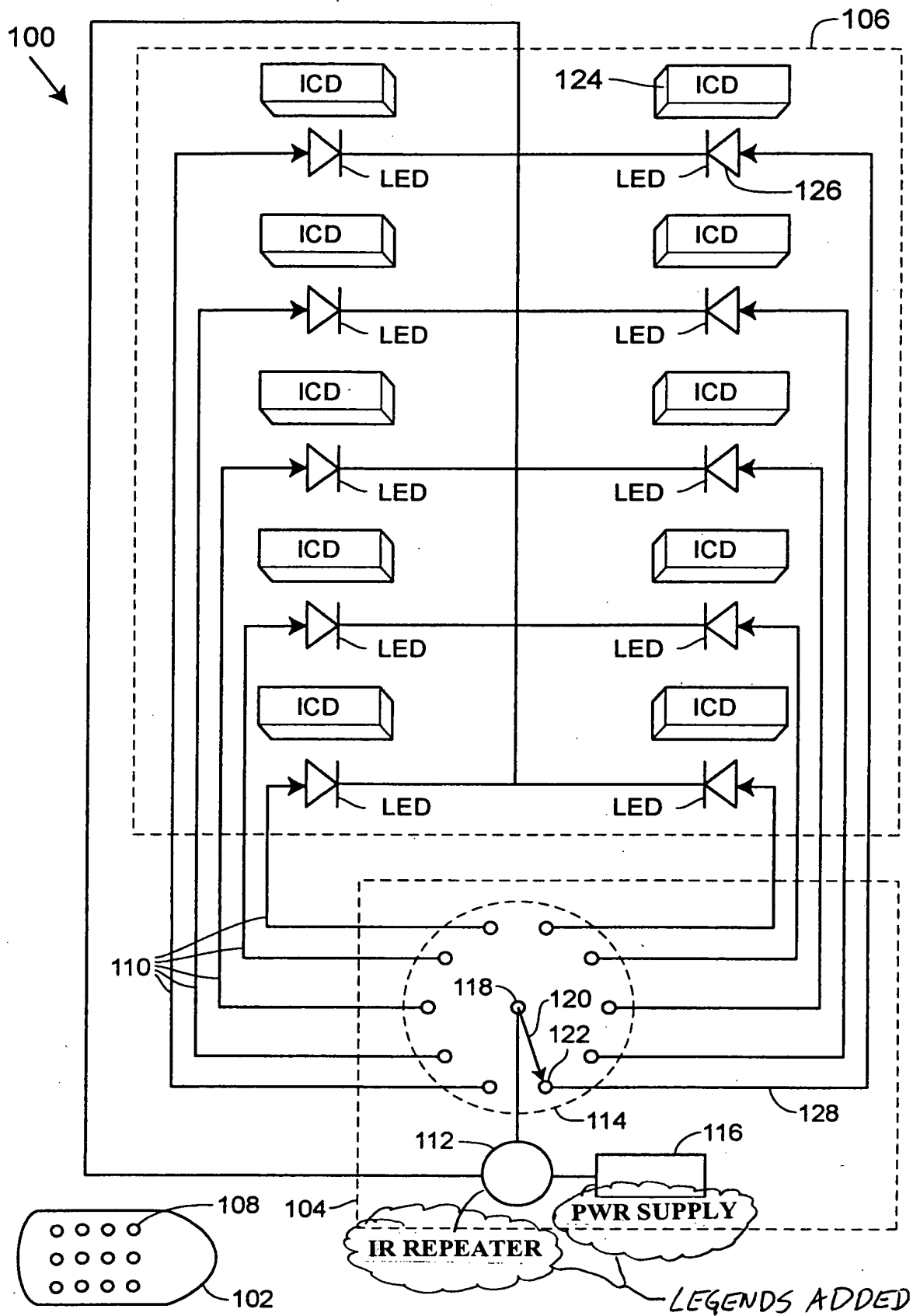


FIG. 2

